

The Andhi Khola Project

Nepal is a small country in the Himalayan Mountains between India and Tibet. Over recent years, small-scale hydro schemes have been installed to bring electricity to rural villages. Hydro schemes are similar to watermills, except that often they are designed to generate electricity for grinding grain, cooking and lighting. One of the areas where electrification is taking place is in Andhi Khola.

Electricity makes a real difference to people's lives but, when it is first available in a village, people need help with using it safely and efficiently. In particular, people have questions about:

- how you can use electricity economically
- what is the best way to use an electric cooker?
- is electricity dangerous to use?



Nepalese woman using an electric cooker

A public education campaign is an important part of rural electrification work.

The villagers from Andhi Khola were involved in identifying the best methods of communicating key messages about safe use of electricity to the people in the region.

Pause for thought

Identify a national or local campaign in the UK (eg “Kill Your Speed, Not a Child”) and consider:

- what media were used to communicate the message?
- why do you think these media were chosen?
- who makes the decision about the choice of media in the UK?

Graphic products in Nepal

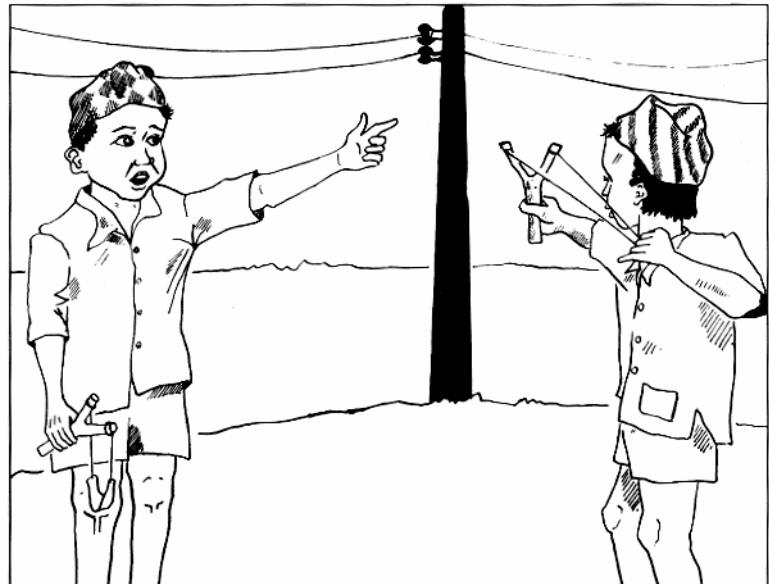
In the Andhi Khola region, many people do not read or write in a common language. This means that instruction leaflets and booklets are not appropriate to the majority of people. It was important to find ways of communicating key messages that would be understood easily.

It was decided that a number of different media were necessary to communicate key messages. Street theatre performances in the locality were held when people were not at work, teaching about the use and safety of electricity.

The key messages of the campaign were:

- safety in the house
- safety outside the house
- end uses of electricity

Starting the day after theatre performances, trainers would call at people's homes with a set of materials for the trainers to refer to during home visits. The materials were flash cards to stimulate discussion about key safety messages. A number of posters were also developed which would be left behind in peoples' homes and displayed in public places.



Pause for thought

In the UK, pictorial signs and symbols are often used to communicate information.

Identify a range of graphical products in the UK that communicate messages of safety or efficiency and consider:

- Do they meet the needs of the users?

Do you think the media of communication used in Andhi Khola is appropriate?

You may wish to use these as starting points:

- are the messages clear?
- does it encourage audience participation?
- is it easy to use?

What other points do you need to consider?



a sign in the UK to warn against danger

TASK In Nepal, flash cards are used to teach rural communities about safe use of electricity. This type of graphic product can be used throughout the world for public education campaigns.

Design a graphic product pack to support a public education campaign in the UK. The pack must be portable and should encourage participation by the audience.